

Post Event Summary

On July 28, the Fairfax MRC conducted the third quarterly emergency notification drill of 2014 to test response capacity of all Active MRC volunteers. The notification was sent using the newly implemented Fairfax Volunteer Alerts. Messages were sent to MRC volunteers using email addresses, text messages (if set up in their VMS account) and all phones listed in their VMS account. Volunteers were asked to select a link (email response), reply with a number (text response) or select a number (phone response) to the alert message received. This drill lasted for approximately 12

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hours on a Monday, from 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

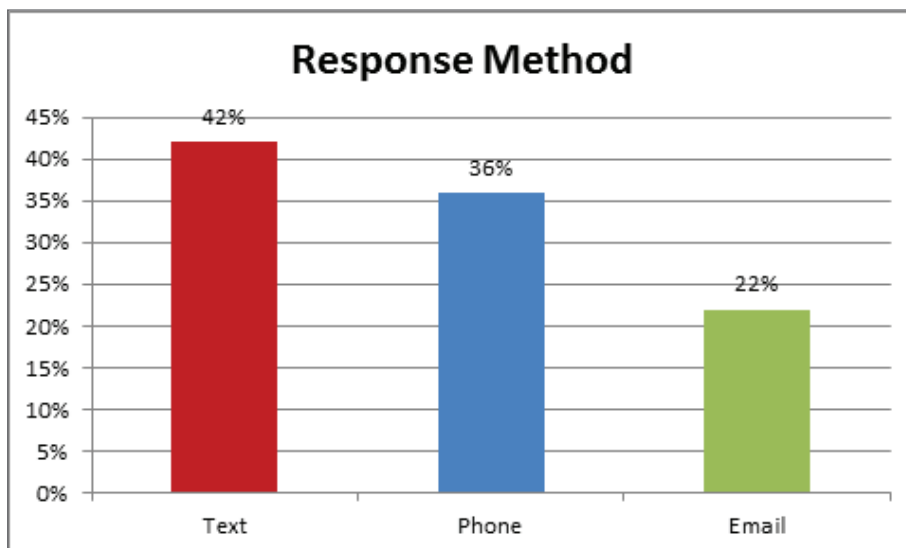
An after action survey was sent to all active MRC volunteers, for their feedback in the exercise. A summary of the exercise and findings of the surveys are included below.

Key Facts and Figures:

- This exercise was held on Monday, July 28, 2014 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- All 507 Active volunteers were sent the emergency alert using Fairfax Volunteer Alerts. The message was sent by email, text message and phone call.
- Volunteers were alerted using 3 to 6 methods. Text messages were sent first to any volunteer with a text message set up in their VMS profile. Primary and secondary email addresses were sent next, followed by day, evening and cell phones. Volunteers were required to respond to only one of the communication methods, but many responded to multiple alerts (both text and email, etc.)
- Any volunteer who did not respond received a second alert 2 hours later.
- 91% (461) Fairfax MRC volunteers that were alerted as part of the exercise responded. Of those who responded:
 - 42% responded via text message
 - 36% responded via phone
 - 22% responded via email
- Of those who responded:
 - 46% were available
 - 45% were unavailable
 - 9% other

Survey Results Summary:

- 213 volunteers responded to the survey; 199 participated in the drill, 14 indicated that they did not participate.
- Multiple volunteers indicated that they were unable to participate in this exercise but responded to the message. Because this is purely a notification drill, MRC volunteer participation is recorded for all volunteers who respond to the drill as requested – in this case – responding to the notification message. No additional participation is required for activity credit beyond responding to the notification.
- Email and text message were indicated as the most often utilized method for receiving and responding to messages from the Fairfax MRC program office.
- 91% of volunteers who responded to the survey indicated that they would participate in a similar activity in the future, 75% felt better prepared for a public health emergency, while 80% felt a stronger connection to their community as a result of this exercise.



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Lessons Learned:

- The voice notification sent to each volunteer's phones left a voicemail on these devices if calls were unanswered. This voicemail left an 800 number for volunteers to call and a multi-digit serial number necessary to enter to respond. The voicemail was long and very difficult for many volunteers to respond to. The notification was not supposed to include a voicemail.
 - Actions Taken: The MRC program office will be following up to determine why a voicemail was left for notification, and identify what steps are necessary to assure it does not occur again.
- Volunteers indicated that they were unsure how best to respond to the notification drill. Many indicated that they responded to multiple message methods. Volunteer Alerts is set up to stop sending alerts to your other devices (email, phone, etc.) as soon as a response has been received.
 - Actions Necessary: Volunteers only needed to respond to one message – the one most convenient for you to respond to. You may receive an additional alert after you have responded. This is because the automated system has already started to send the next alert before it receives your response (i.e., it has already started to send an email alert before you responded to the text alert). It is ok if you respond to more than one alert.
- Volunteers indicated confusion regarding the expectations of the notification drill. The MRC program utilizes notification drills to assess our ability to communicate with you, and also as a spot check to see at any given moment our capacity to respond. THERE IS NO EXPECTATION FOR VOLUNTEERS TO PHYSICALLY RESPOND during a notification drill. We are simply assessing if there was an emergency at that moment, how many volunteers would be available.
 - Actions Taken: The MRC program has incorporated MRC Notification into the MRC Orientation, so that all incoming MRC volunteers understand what will happen both during a Notification drill, and real activation, and the expectations of them.
 - Actions Taken: The MRC program will build "refresher" opportunities into training and other communications with current MRC volunteers to continue to emphasize the expectations of volunteers during notification drills and real activations.
- Results from this drill show that text messages and phone calls are the most effective way to communicate with you during an emergency.
 - Actions Taken: The Program office will reserve text messages and phone calls for exercises, activations and messages of high importance. Email communication will be used for routine communication, as well as during exercises and activations.
 - Actions Necessary: Volunteers should update their contact information in VMS, including the following (if you need any assistance, please contact the program office at HDMRC@FairfaxCounty.gov or 703-246-8641):
 - ◆ You have a text message phone number and that your carrier is correct,
 - ◆ Your phone numbers are current,
 - ◆ Your email address(es) are current, and
 - ◆ Your emergency contact information is current.

2014 Notification Drill Response Rate

